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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE,
AND TRANSPORTATION

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6125

WEBSITE: <https://commerce.senate.gov>

April 16, 2021

The Honorable Gina M. Raimondo
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Raimondo:

The travel and tourism sector is a pillar of the American economy. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, this industry supported roughly 16 million jobs and generated \$1.1 trillion in consumer spending, which led to \$2.54 trillion in total economic output. This sector has faced unique and unprecedented challenges over the past year. Of all jobs lost nationwide from the pandemic, 40 percent are attributable to declines in leisure and hospitality employment. As vaccines reach more Americans and states begin modifying restrictions, people will once again resume travel and frequent restaurants, hotels, and vacation rentals in increasing numbers. Recognizing your role as the principal business voice in the Administration and your leadership of the Tourism Policy Council (TPC), we request that the Department of Commerce update the National Travel and Tourism Strategy (NTTS) to reflect the impacts of COVID-19.

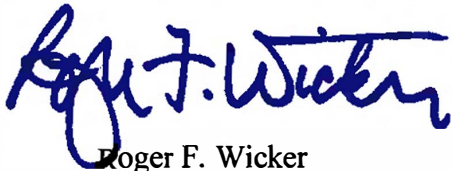
We would like to see specific strategies and recommendations that prioritize public health and economic recovery in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These strategies should help agencies promote the safe resumption of domestic and international travel by identifying actions they can take to impart traveler confidence and enlarge opportunities for safe travel.

An updated NTTS would help outline the scope and severity of the pandemic's effects on travel and tourism, as well as the steps the Federal government can take to help this industry fully recover and thrive again. Specifically, we hope an updated NTTS would develop a set of policies, actions, and recommendations to promote the safe resumption of domestic and international travel, and that each agency will develop straightforward, commonsense approaches that will reduce barriers, create opportunities, and improve customer service enabling the return of pre-pandemic levels of demand.

Accounting for the pandemic's impact within the NTTS will help inform policymaking as we look to support a full recovery in the travel and tourism sector. This is especially important for our states, which rely on tourists visiting scenic parks, attractions, restaurants, and hotels. We stand ready to assist in this effort, and we look forward to partnering with you and the other members of the TPC to support a full recovery in the travel and tourism industry.

If you have any questions, please contact Darien Flowers of the Republican staff at (202) 224-1251 and Shannon Smith of the Democratic Staff at (202) 924-3079. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



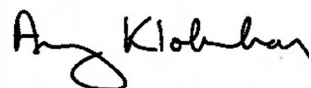
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